

Message Text

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ACTION EB-07

INFO OCT-01 AF-06 EUR-12 NEA-10 ISO-00 CCO-00 CIAE-00

OTPE-00 FCC-01 INR-07 NSAE-00 OC-05 USIA-06 COME-00

BIB-01 ACDA-07 DODE-00 PM-04 L-03 NASA-01 NSC-05

OES-06 PA-01 PRS-01 /084 W

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R 161500Z APR 76

FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2136

INFO AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI

AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY AMMAN

USINT BAGHDAD

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY DOHA

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY MUSCAT

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY SANA

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

AMEMBASSY TUNIS

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ETEL

SUBJ: ARAB SATELLITE COMMUNICATIONS MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE

1. FOUR-DAY CAIRO MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE ON ARAB
TELECOMMUNICATIONS CLOSED APRIL 15 WITH AGREEMENT
BY ALL 20 NATIONS REPRESENTED (REPORTEDLY INCLUDING
PALESTINE, BUT EXCLUDING MAURITANIA, WHICH WAS
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ABSENT) TO SET UP SPACE COMMUNICATIONS NETWORK.

SIGNED DOCUMENT WAS SEEN BRIEFLY BY MEMBER OF EMBASSY STAFF, BUT WE DO NOT YET HAVE ANY DETAILS. WE UNDERSTAND AGREEMENT IS SUBJECT TO RATIFICATION BY ALL PARTIES CONCERNED AND THAT TECHNICAL AND LEGAL COMMITTEES HAVE BEEN ESTABLISHED TO STUDY IMPLEMENTATION. NETWORK WILL BE BASED AT RIYADH.

2. ARB LEAGUE DIRECTOR OF COMMUNICATIONS MAJOR GENERAL IBRAHIM ABDEL FATTAH ANNOUNCED APRIL 15 THAT SATELLITE PROJECT WILL COST \$100 MILLION, PLUS \$50 MILLION FOR GROUND STATIONS. HE SAID COSTS WILL BE BORNE BY MEMBER STATES IN PROPORTION TO UTILIZATION AND THAT OPERATIONS WILL BEGIN LATER PART OF 1978.

3. CONFERENCE WAS HELD AT ARAB LEAGUE HEADQUARTERS. SESSION WAS OPENED BY ARAB LEAGUE SEC GEN MAHMOUD RIAD AND CHAIRED BY SAUDI MINPOST, TELEPHONE AND TELEGRAPH 'ALAWI DARWISH KAYYAL. PRESS RELEASE WAS ISSUED AT END OF FIRST DAY OF CONFERENCE, BUT PRESS COVERAGE HAS BEEN SCANTY.

4. INITIAL CONTACTS WITH INTERESTED U.S. FIRMS INDICATE THAT TECHNICAL COMMITTEE TO EVALUATE SPECIFICATIONS HOPES TO FINISH ITS TASK WITHIN FIVE MONTHS, ALTHOUGH SUPPLIERS ARE SKEPTICAL THIS IS SUFFICIENT TIME. WE HEAR ALSO THAT SAUDIS AND KUWAITIS WERE RIVALS FOR SYSTEM'S HEADQUARTERS, WITH SAUDIS APPARENTLY SUCCESSFUL IN CORRIDOR NEGOTIATION AT CONFERENCE. ONE UNCONFIRMED REPORT PASSED TO US CONCERNS POSSIBLE USE BY ARAB NETWORK OF A FRANCO-GERMAN SATELLITE, BUT WE HAVE NO FURTHER INFORMATION AT THIS TIME.
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Message Attributes

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